

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

[Genesis 12.1-9](#)

[Psalm 33.1-12;](#)

[Romans 4.13-25](#)

[Matthew 9.9-13; 9.18-26](#)

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## Make Room

In the Gospel today, Jesus does something both tender and unsettling: he moves toward the very people respectable society has already decided to keep at a distance. He calls Matthew from the tax booth and then sits at table with people others dismiss as sinners. He stops for a woman who has lived with suffering in her body for twelve years. He enters a house shadowed by grief and takes a dead girl by the hand. In every scene, Jesus crosses a boundary others are busy defending. He crosses the line between insider and outsider, clean and unclean, worthy and unworthy. And in doing so, he reveals something essential about the life of God: divine love is not cautious or cramped. It is always moving outward, always making room, always drawing near.

That matters because many people know what it is to live on the edge of belonging. Some know it through illness, disability, pain, fatigue, grief, or private wounds that make daily life harder than others can see. Some know it because communities, including churches, often welcome only a narrow version of human life: the strong, the articulate, the cheerful, the easy to organise, the easy to understand. Exclusion is not always dramatic. Often it arrives quietly, hidden inside assumptions about what a normal body, mind, or life should be. But the Gospel does not begin with

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those assumptions. It begins with Jesus seeing people as they are and refusing to treat them as interruptions.

That may be one of the hardest truths for us to receive: in the kingdom of God, people are not loved because they are easy. They are not cherished because they are productive, independent, healthy, or admired. They are welcomed because they are beloved. Matthew is beloved before the table changes him. The bleeding woman is beloved before her body is restored. The grieving household is beloved before joy returns. God's love does not wait for transformation in order to begin. Love is where transformation begins. That is why Jesus says, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." He is exposing a deep spiritual temptation: the temptation to protect our systems of order and control at the expense of actual people.

Perhaps that is why this Gospel speaks so powerfully just after Trinity Sunday. The Trinity is not only a doctrine to explain, but a mystery to inhabit: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God in communion, self-giving love, and delight. If we are made in the image of this God, then we too are made for relationship — with God and with one another. That means dependence is not failure. Need is not shame.

Interdependence is not weakness. To need care, to live with limits, to ask for help, to move slowly, to think differently, or to carry sorrow does not place a person outside the life of God. It may bring us closer to the truth of what being human has always meant.

This is especially important when we speak about healing. The church has sometimes caused harm by speaking as though healing always means cure. But many faithful people live with pain that remains, conditions that persist, minds that struggle, bodies that change, and losses that do not reverse. If we say that healing only counts when someone gets better, we risk telling many beloved children of God that the Gospel somehow passed them by. Yet the ministry of Jesus reveals

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something much richer. Healing can be physical, yes. But healing can also be the restoration of dignity, the end of shame, the return of community, the courage to lament truthfully, the support of friendship, and the discovery that one's life remains holy even in limitation. Sometimes healing is not a return to what was before, as many of us have (and continue to experience). Sometimes it is the grace of finding that God is present here too.

Consider the woman in the crowd. Before the miracle there are twelve long years: years of managing her body, her limitation, and likely her exclusion. And what does Jesus do? He does not rebuke her for interrupting him. He does not hurry past her on the way to a more urgent need. He turns. He sees. He speaks. Sometimes the first miracle is not cure but recognition. To be truly seen — not as a category, not as a burden, but as beloved — can begin to heal what years of exclusion have wounded.

So what might this mean for the church? It means inclusion must become more than sentiment. Here at Holy Hermits Online, inclusion and accessibility lay at the heart of our community. It shapes the way we pray, gather, speak, and imagine community together. It means listening before assuming. It means not measuring discipleship by stamina, visibility, or cheerfulness. It means honouring each other as we participate online, honouring those who may need silence, those whose communication is different, those whose bodies move unpredictably, and those whose needs require us to reassess and even change our habits. The deeper question is this: are we merely inviting people into a space designed for someone else, or are we willing to let love reshape the space itself? In our digital space here at HHO, many of us – including myself – have found a space in which we are able to be, not a space we are required to fit in to. In the Gospel, interruption is not the enemy of ministry. It is often where ministry begins.

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And that is what makes this Gospel so deeply hopeful. The church is not ours to narrow. It is Christ's to enlarge. The table belongs to the One who ate with Matthew. The road belongs to the One who stopped for the suffering woman. The house of mourning belongs to the One who took the child by the hand. Every one of those moments tells the same truth: there is room in God's family for those who fear they are too much, and for those who fear they are not enough. The good news is not that only the strong belong. The good news is that belonging itself is part of how God heals us. So may we become the kind of church that reflects the life of the Triune God: a church where mercy is greater than respectability, where vulnerability is not despised, and where every person can hear the voice of Christ saying, "Take heart."

May we go in peace, held in mercy and made spacious by love.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

## Room Enough

Lord Jesus,  
come gently through our quiet rooms  
and hold us by name.

Where hearts are tired,  
be rest.

Where sorrow lingers,  
be near.

Gather the weary and the wounded,  
and those who wonder if they belong,  
and set your mercy among us  
like warm bread in open hands.

Make your church a gentle place,  
a longer table,  
a softer song.

And in the heart of God,  
where there is room enough for all,  
let us rest in your whisper:

Take heart, beloved;  
there is a place for you here.

Amen.